



March 2015

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter
Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

www.ebcnps.org

www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps

MEMBERS' MEETING

SOD Was Just the Beginning: Coping with Invasive Pathogens in the Nursery, the Garden, and the Wild
Speaker: Theo Fitanides, Manager of Native Here Nursery

Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 pm

Location: Garden Room, Orinda Public Library (directions below)

Since the second discovery of *Phytophthora tentaculata* (a root rotting "water mold," relative of Sudden Oak Death) in California, this time in an SFPUC restoration outplanting, the restoration community has been re-thinking its pathogen management practices. Native Here Nursery Manager Theo Fitanides will give a brief background on these root rot "plant destroyers," before discussing in more detail the steps that native nurseries, restoration practitioners, and gardeners can take to help reduce current threats and fend off future threats. The mood of the talk will be hopeful, amid the harsh realities of invasive species.



Theo Fitanides, photo by Janice Bray

In Fall of 2013, Theo took over management of the CNPS East Bay chapter's Native Here Nursery. The nursery is dedicated to growing locally-sourced plants for local gardeners and land managers who want to provide co-evolved plant material for restoration, whether it is in a private backyard or Mount Diablo State Park. Theo earned his B.S. in Biological

Sciences from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and has worked in landscaping, nurseries, conservation, and consulting. He is currently a member of the California Native Nursery Network (CaNNN) steering committee, which is helping to organize an effective local response to these new threats to our wild lands.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Garden Room is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Garden Room opens at 7 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Email sr0433@yahoo.com or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way:

From the west, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way.

From the east, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way.

Once on Orinda Way, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the southeast side of the two-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street.

From BART (4 blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a second pedestrian bridge on the left. Go 1 short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go 2 blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library.

Upcoming Meetings

April 22, 7:30 pm
Aleta George: Poet Ina Coolbrith's Love of California Wildflowers

May 27, 7:30 pm
Bart O'Brien, Director, Regional Parks Botanic Garden

CONSERVATION ANALYST FUND CLOSES IN ON GOAL

The 2014 Conservation Analyst Fund is almost there! \$6100 is needed to meet our goal.

We are thrilled that we are so close. Many thanks go to all of you who have contributed. It is very gratifying to the Board and the Conservation Committee to receive your support.

If you haven't yet contributed, donations may be made using PayPal on the East Bay Chapter website or send a check to the

Chapter's address (PO Box 5597, Elmwood Station, Berkeley, CA 94705). Please write "Conservation Analyst Fund" in the memo. All contributions are tax deductible.

We would like to thank the following generous donors for their contributions to the 2014 Conservation Analyst Fund.

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We also thank the following businesses:

Earthly Delights
Oaktown Native Plant Nursery
PG&E Campaign for the Community
Chevron Humankind

Native Here Nursery Sale on Saturday, March 28

Native Here Nursery is having a spring sale on Saturday, March 28, with extended hours, 10 am to 4 pm. The sale will focus on turning over older stock and selling perennials. Things will be discounted! The nursery needs volunteers to help with coordination and on the day of the sale. Contact Theo Titianides, the Manager of Native Here Nursery at the nursery number (510) 549-0211 or by email at ttitanides@cnps.org.

RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT

Adopt a Rare Plant and Rare Plant Treasure Hunt Spring 2015 Kickoff Meeting, March 31st, 2015, 7-8:30 pm, Orinda Public Library, Gallery Room

Since the initiation of the Adopt-a-Rare-Plant Program by the East Bay Chapter in 2011 dedicated volunteers have reported on many historically documented and several rare plant occurrences in the East Bay region that are new to science. Without this diligent work information about the health and size of our rare plant populations would be missing or far from current. In other areas of the state the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt (RPTH) has also been very successful since its inception. Overall, a total of 2,500 rare plant occurrences have been updated through the RPTH program, with nearly 1,000 of those new to science! Danny Slakey, who has recently moved to Oakland, is the current RPTH coordinator and is excited to botanize our biodiversity hotspot in Oakland. Reflecting on the successes of both the RPTH and Adopt-a-Rare Plant programs, we thought it would be great to combine our programs in strategic ways. The Adopt-a-Rare-Plant program is essentially one "flavor" of the RPTH, in which volunteers focus on a single species for one or two years. RPTHers in other parts of this state have sometimes used a similar

approach, while others have used different approaches, such as targeting all of the rare plants in a small geographic area. By overlapping these programs we aim to offer support for rare plant adopters and provide a regular schedule of outings for local day trips in the greater Bay Area. We are also looking forward to searching for some of our locally rare plants.

On Tuesday, March 31st, from 7 to 8:30 pm, we will be holding an orientation meeting for volunteers interested in adopting a rare plant or learning about RPTH opportunities for the approaching blooming season. The meeting will be held at the Gallery Room of the Orinda Public Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda CA. The Library is within walking distance of the Orinda BART Station. Information about the Adopt-a-Rare Plant Program can be found at <http://www.ebcnps.org/rareplants.html> and details about the RPTH program at <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/>. RSVP to dslakey@cnps.org by Thursday, March 26th. We look forward to seeing you!

Heath Bartosh and Danny Slakey

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Registration for the Sunday, May 3, 2015 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is now open. This year's tour will fill up – register now to reserve your place.

Visit the Bringing Back the Natives website to register and for more information about the Garden Tour and other Bringing back the Natives activities.

<http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/>

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

Comments on Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse Plan: On February 10th I attended the Concord City Council Meeting on behalf of the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS). This meeting and a second one held on the 11th were scheduled to hear presentations from the three companies who are in final consideration for the contract to build out of the Concord Naval Weapons Station as part of the re-use plan adopted by the city in 2012. At the meeting I made comments recommending the Council factor in protecting and avoiding the areas of the site that contain sensitive natural resources as well as keeping a corridor open between the shoreline and the slopes of Mt. Diablo. The habitat corridor that the naval weapons station currently provides was one of the main considerations that led to its listing as one of EBCNPS's 15 Botanical Priority Protection Areas.

This project is at the final stages of a multi-year planning effort, and EBCNPS has been involved from the beginning. At the February 10th and 11th meetings, environmental groups and citizens packed the City Council meeting room and much of an overflow room as well. There are many eyes watching this project move forward, and we are hopeful that the great community input received so far will continue to guide the plan toward a project that benefits the region both economically and environmentally.

Ongoing Projects

The Conservation Committee is tracking several ongoing projects in 2015:

We are still awaiting the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed expansion of Carnegie Off Highway Vehicle

Park in Alameda County. Our committee is ready to provide strong comments on the plan and along with our coalition of environmental organizations. We hope to make a powerful case for preserving the 3,400 acre Alameda Tesla parcel for conservation and passive recreation.

We are waiting on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to take the next step regarding their approval and funding of fuels management projects in the East Bay Hills. You can check the conservation blog if you haven't seen the letter we sent last month on this issue.

We are working to set up meetings with the managers of the Richmond Field Station to help provide input on better grassland management practices for the several acres of remnant *Danthonia* grassland present at the site.

Volunteering: The Conservation Committee is always looking for new volunteers to get involved in our many projects. If you are interested in working with me on any of the projects that you have read about on our blog or in past Conservation Analyst Updates, please feel free to contact me by phone at (510) 734-0335 or by email at conservation@ebcnps.org. And as always, for more detailed updates on all of our conservation projects please visit the Conservation Blog at <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/> .

Mack Casterman



Flowers on Brooks Island, picture by Jane Kelly. Among those pictured are johnny jump ups (*Viola pedunculata*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), and checker blooms (*Sidalcea malviflora*).

FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, March 15, 10:00 am, Seafoam Loop and Black Oak Loop at Kennedy Grove, El Sobrante: Gregg Weber will be leading this trip to a botanically rich area in El Sobrante. In the shady areas under bay trees, there is more plant diversity than you would expect, with many common natives, and some unusual ones. Under the oaks on the ridge there are whole different communities.

Both kinds of false solomon's seal, trilliums, meadow rue, gooseberries, American vetch, shooting stars, cream cups, rein orchids, fritillaries, pipevine, madrone, Wight's paintbrush, arnica, spotted coralroot, Indian warriors, ok, I have to stop now. This is a short 2.5 mile walk, with only a 400 feet elevation gain up to the ridge, and 150 feet elevation gain on Black Oak Loop.

Directions: From I-80, exit at San Pablo Dam Road and turn onto Castro Ranch Road in El Sobrante. From Orinda, take San Pablo Dam Road to El Sobrante, and turn onto Castro Ranch Road. Go two blocks on Castro Ranch Road, and then turn right onto Hillside Drive. Go about 1/2 mile to the end of Hillside Drive, and then turn left on Patra Drive and park near the trailhead. No entrance fees. Do not turn into the Kennedy Grove park entrance on San Pablo Dam Road.

Outdoor activities are inherently risky. As with all of this group's events, by attending you agree to be 100% responsible for your own safety, health, and happiness.

Saturday, March 21, 10 am, Knowland Park field trip

Meet up with Janet Gawthrop to revisit plants in the zoo development shadow and elsewhere in the park. This will be a beginner level field trip, with a focus on plant communities

of coastal prairie, maritime chaparral and oak woodland with minimal discussion of future development. You can just show up, or bring your hand lens and maybe Barbara Ertter's *Annotated Checklist of the East Bay Flora* or *Plants of the SF Bay Area*, second edition, by Beidleman and Kozloff. The website www.calflora.org is an important resource for native plant identification and study. We will start with walking and talking at a general level, and then circle back for on-site keying sessions for all interested. E-mail janetgawthrop47@gmail.com to sign up and find out about the meeting site.

Sunday, March 22, 2 pm, David Margolies will lead a nature walk in Samuel Taylor State Park in Marin County. We will walk the Pioneer Tree Trail, through old and new growth redwood groves and mixed evergreen forest. Numerous flowers of redwood forests should be in bloom, including fairybells, fetid adder's tongue, false solomon's seal, and trillium. There are many species of trees besides redwood, including Douglas fir and California nutmeg.

Directions From the East Bay: take the Richmond-San Rafael bridge westbound. Once in Marin, take the second exit, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Stay on the boulevard across the county. You will pass through Fairfax and over the hill into the San Geronimo valley. When you pass the village of Lagunitas you will enter the state park. The picnic area is a mile or so on the left. Enter there, pay the entrance fee and park in the picnic area. Cross the stream on the bridge and meet in the group picnic area parking lot, where the Pioneer Tree Trail starts. The walk is two miles, with an elevation change of a couple of hundred feet. David Margolies can be contacted at 510-393-1858, divaricatum@gmail.com.

RESTORATION PROJECTS

Saturdays, March 7 and March 21, 9:30 am to 2 pm, Point Isabel, on the Bay Trail next to the dog park. Just off I-580 (take Central to the bottom of the I-580 overpass). At the stop sign (Rydin Road) turn right and come down to the end of the street. If you pass Costco on your right, you've gone too far. Contact info: Tom Kelly (510) 704-8628 (work), (510) 684-6484 (cell) or tkelly@kyotousa.org.

Sunday, March 1, noon, Sabercat Creek restoration, Fremont. Join Fremont environmental workers in this ongoing restoration project at Sabercat Creek Site 4, near Quema Drive. E-mail sabrina.siebert@gmail.com to get the Eventbrite registration link. Be prepared for poison oak, although it is relatively scarce in this watershed.

Saturday, March 14, 9:30 am, Huckleberry Park (Oakland side). Huckleberry Park is gorgeous, but it will remain so only with removal of exotic species that slip downhill into the park from the residential area along Skyline. Join us in the parking lot and we will decide on a work site and weeds to attack, depending on weather and soil conditions.

Sunday, March 15, 9:00 am Sibley Park. We will meet at the Skyline parking lot (Oakland-side) to check in with park staff and get loaner tools and water. Grassland die-hards may want to return to the wall of broom, but we may also attack other weeds this month, such as teasel and exotic thistles. If you want to park and walk in from Old Tunnel Road staging area, please e-mail janetgawthrop47@gmail.com to let us know.

Tuesday, March 3 and Saturday, March 21, 10:00 am to noon, Garber Park. Join us as we continue pulling ivy, Himalayan blackberry, thistle and other invasive weeds. We'll also be performing some trail maintenance while the ground is still soft enough for digging. Wear long sleeves, long pants and shoes with good treads. We provide gloves, tools, water and snacks. Meet at the Evergreen Lane Entrance to Garber Park. For directions (both driving and bus) and more information visit our website www.garberparkstewards.org, contact Shelagh. garberparkstewards@gmail.com or 510-517-1918.

POINT ISABEL AND BROOKS ISLAND IN FEBRUARY

February is for lovers. But not just for those who celebrate their affection on Valentine's Day. It's for Nature's lovers, as well. February is the month when we see plants begin to re-emerge from the soil after several months of respite. And so the natural cycle begins again—a cycle that renews and refreshes those of us drawn to the mystery and beauty of Nature.

This month, we held three work parties at Point Isabel and we also took a small crew back to Brooks Island to continue our ice plant and trash removal work there. The rain softened the earth at Point Isabel, and at steward Margot's Richmond "Adopt-a-Spot" at the corner of Central Avenue and Rydin Road, and made it much easier for us to remove invasive mallow along with oxalis, radish, oat grass, thistle and dandelion. We planted purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*) donated by Delia Taylor, and sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*). We were delighted to see the eight arroyo willows leaf out and that the cottonwood is in bud. The buckeyes were the first to emerge with their spring-green crown of leaves looking like candelabras. Project volunteer and CNPS member Janet Gawthrop spent a good part of a February day with us updating the plant list she created for us several years ago and providing us with updated names of the plants.

On our February 19 trip to Brooks Island, we were happy to see that the areas we had cleared of ice plant last year were still clear and looking beautiful. Together with Ranger Nick from the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) we worked on several areas and pulled up 60 large piles of ice plant. Core volunteer Rob worked non-stop picking up trash. Sad to say, there was so much of it we could barely fit it in the boat on the trip back to the Richmond Marina! Nevertheless, Brooks Island looked a lot better at the end of the day. Late in the day we took a short hike to the top of the island and spotted countless violets (*Viola douglasii*) in full bloom alongside California biscuit root (*Lomatium californica*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), and checker mallow (*Sidalcea malviflora*). The hillside was also covered in soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*).

Special thanks to the EBRPD for their great support for us this busy month and for the fantastic trip to Brooks Island. And since it's still February—love to all!

Jane and Tom Kelly



POINT ISABEL PICTURES



Pictures of the Point Isabel and Brooks Island restorations by Jane Kelly. On previous page, Point Isabel work crew. Above left, Arthur on Brooks Island. Above right, Brooks Island trash haul. Below, Brooks Island work crew.



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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list

Emailed announcements of upcoming EBCNPS events

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vacant

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- Patron, \$300
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- Mariposa Lily, \$1500
- Limited Income or student, \$25.00
- Other _____

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Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1,
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